

## Message Text

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20

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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/118 W

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R 161334Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

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INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY SANAA

AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMCONSUL BELFAST

AMCONSUL STRASBOURG

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE  
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS  
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 1933

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PORG, EI  
SUBJECT: EURO-ARAB MEETING IN DUBLIN

BEGIN SUMMARY: ARAB AND EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS HAD A MEETING IN DUBLIN LAST WEEK, ONE OF A SERIES ORGANIZED BY THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION FOR EURO-ARAB COOPERATION. MAINLY ECONOMICS WERE DISCUSSED. AT THE END A CALL WAS MADE FOR A NEW INITIATIVE ON PALESTINE BY EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS. THE IRISH GOVERNMENT, THOUGH NOT DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE MEETING, BELIEVES IT WAS HARMLESS AND WELCOMED THE OPPORTUNITY TO BUTTONHOLE THE REPRESENTATIVES ON THE SUBJECT OF NOT SUPPORTING OUR LOCAL TERRORISTS (I.E. THE IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY). END SUMMARY.

1. ABOUT THIRTY-FIVE ARAB AND EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTARIANS MET IN DUBLIN LAST WEEK UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSOCIATION FOR EURO-ARAB COOPERATION. ARAB REPRESENTATIVES ATTENDING WERE FROM TUNISIA, EGYPT, MAURETANIA, YEMEN (ADEN), UAE, ALGERIA, AND REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE "PALESTINE NATIONAL COUNCIL (PLO)" TRAVELING ON IRAQUI PASS-PORTS. ALL EC COUNTRIES EXCEPT DENMARK WERE REPRESENTED. THIS ASSOCIATION, WITH HEADQUARTERS IN PARIS, WAS APPARENTLY FOUNDED IN 1974 AND HAS HELD PREVIOUS MEETINGS IN PARIS, DAMASCUS AND STRASBOURG.

2. THE HOSTS FOR THIS MEETING WERE TWO COUNTY MAYO MEMBERS OF THE IRISH PARLIAMENT, MILES STAUNTON, AND SEAN FLANAGAN, WHO ARE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION. NEITHER THE IRISH PARLIAMENT NOR THE GOVERNMENT APPARENTLY HAD ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE MEETING, WHICH WAS ORGANIZED AND FUNDED BY THE ASSOCIATION AND THE IRISH-ARAB SOCIETY. THE FOREIGN MINISTRY SOURCE SWEARS THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTRY KNEW NOTHING ABOUT THE MEETING UNTIL REQUESTS FOR VISAS STARTED COMING IN FROM "ODD" PLACES. IN ANY EVENT, FOREIGN MINISTER FITZGERALD DECIDED TO HOST A RECEPTION FOR THE DELEGATES, PRIMARILY TO BUTTONHOLE THEM ABOUT CONFIDENTIAL

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THE NORTHERN IRELAND SITUATION. FITZGERALD HAS BEEN WORKING, HARD WITH SOME SUCCESS, TO CONVINCE VARIOUS RADICAL ARABS (PARTICULARLY LIBYA AND THE PLO) THAT THEY SHOULD NOT SUPPORT THE IRISH REPUBLICAN ARMY (IRA).

3. ACCORDING TO VARIOUS SOURCES THE DISCUSSIONS AT THE MEETING WERE VAGUE, GENERAL, AND VERY "CAREFUL." MANY PIOUS SENTIMENTS WERE EXPRESSED ABOUT "PEACE" IN LEBANON. ECONOMIC COOPERATION WAS THE

SUBJECT OF MOST OF THE DISCUSSIONS. AT THE END OF THE CONFERENCE THE "EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE" IN A PRESS CONFERENCE CALLED UPON EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS TO TAKE "NEW INITIATIVES" IN FAVOR OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE IN PALESTINE. DEPUTY STAUNTON, ACCORDING TO THE PAPERS, SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT THE GOI VIEWS WERE ON SUCH AN INITIATIVE, BUT IF THEY FAVORED IT THEY COULD PERHAPS, INFLUENCE OTHER EUROPEAN GOVERNMENTS.

4. ACCORDING TO OUR SOURCES THE CONFERENCE WAS MARRED BY POOR ORGANIZATION AND A COMIC-OPERA AND VERY PUBLIC SPLIT IN THE RANKS OF THE IRISH ARAB SOCIETY. JUST PRIOR TO THE CONFERENCE THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE SOCIETY, AAIF MATOUK, WAS SACKED BY THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE. MR. MATOUK THEN WENT OFF AND ORGANIZED A RIVAL SOCIETY, MUTTERING DARKLY TO REPORTERS ABOUT A "ZIONIST PLOT." REPRESENTATIVES OF THE RIVAL GROUPS PROCEEDED TO JOSTLE EACH OTHER TRYING TO CAPTURE THE ATTENTION OF THE ARRIVING DELEGATES, WHO WERE SOMEWHAT PUZZLED. ONE OBSERVOR QUOTED BRENDAN BEHAN'S SAYING ABOUT THE TWO IRISHMEN WHO GOT TOGETHER TO FORM A SOCIETY AND THE FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS WAS "WHEN DO WE SPLIT?" IMAGINE THE POSSIBILITIES, HE SAID, OF GETTING BOTH IRISH AND ARABS TOGETHER IN THE SAME SOCIETY.

5. WE ASKED MFA COUNSELOR PADRAIG MURPHY ABOUT THE IRISH GOVERNMENT'S VIEWS ON THIS CONFERENCE, AND PARTICULARLY THE PRESENCE OF PLO REPS WITH IRAQUI PASSPORTS. MURPHY REPLIED THAT THE CONFERENCE, ON BALANCE, DID NOT SEEM TO DO ANY HARM AND THE IRISH ARE INCLINED TO

BEND OVER BACKWARDS THESE DAYS TO BE NICE TO ARABS. ON THE PLO THE GOI HAS A "NUANCED" VIEW, HE SAID. IT DOES NOT APPROVE OF THE TERROR-

ISM OF THE PLO, BUT ON THE OTHER HAND IT TAKES THE VIEW THAT THE PLO IS CAPABLE OF BEING "NUDGED" INTO RIGHT DIRECTIONS AND NOTHING IS GAINED BY PRETENDING THE PLO DOES NOT EXIST. AS FOR LETTING THE REPS  
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INTO IRELAND, THE GOI SAW IT AS A CHANCE TO GIVE THE PLO FURTHER INFORMATION ABOUT THE IRA.  
CURLEY

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## Message Attributes

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